

**SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
COUNTY OF KINGS**

Index No.: \_\_\_\_\_/19

-----X  
**JOHN DOE,**

*Plaintiff,*

**Plaintiff designates  
KINGS COUNTY  
as place of trial.**

**-against -**

**The basis of venue is  
defendants' principal places  
of business.**

**DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN and ROMAN CATHOLIC  
CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK,**

*Defendants.*  
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**SUMMONS**

To the above-named defendants:

**YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED** to answer the complaint in this action and to serve a copy of your answer or, if the complaint is not served with this summons, to serve a notice of appearance, on the Plaintiff's attorneys within 20 days after the service of this summons, exclusive of the day of service (or within 30 days after the service is complete if this summons is not personally delivered to you within the State of New York), and in case your failure to appear or answer, judgement will be taken for the relief demanded herein.

**A COPY OF THIS SUMMONS WAS FILED WITH THE CLERK OF THE COURT,  
KINGS COUNTY ON 10/11/19 IN COMPLIANCE WITH CPLR §§305(a) AND  
306(a).**

Dated: New York, New York  
October 11, 2019

MERSON LAW, PLLC

By: \_\_\_\_\_



Jordan K. Merson  
Attorneys for Plaintiff  
150 East 58<sup>th</sup> Street 34<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, New York 10155  
(212) 603-9100

Defendants' Addresses:

**DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN**

310 Prospect Park West  
Brooklyn, New York 11215

**ROMAN CATHOLIC  
CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK**

9511 4th Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11209

**SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
COUNTY OF KINGS**-----X  
**JOHN DOE,***Plaintiff,*

Index No.: \_\_\_\_\_/19

**-against -****DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN and ROMAN CATHOLIC  
CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK,****VERIFIED  
COMPLAINT***Defendants.*  
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Plaintiff<sup>1</sup>, above-named, complaining of the defendants by **MERSON LAW, PLLC**, respectfully alleges:

**NATURE OF THE CLAIM**

1. This is a case of sexual predator, Reverend John L. Abrams ("Abrams"), being permitted to sexually abuse young children at church by the Diocese of Brooklyn ("Diocese").
2. Abrams was ordained for the Diocese in 1951 and was actively employed by it until his retirement from 1997-2007.
3. Upon information and belief, during his employment with the Diocese, Abrams was transferred from Sacred Heart Catholic Church ("Sacred Heart") in Bayside, Queens to defendant Roman Catholic Church of St. Patrick ("St. Patrick") in 1982 due to his sexual abuse of minors. At Sacred Heart, upon information and belief, he also was demoted due to his sexual abuse of minors.
4. Despite Abram's reputation as a sexual abuser of young children, he continued to be employed by and/or under the supervision and control of the Diocese and St. Patrick's for several more years.

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<sup>1</sup> Plaintiff uses a pseudonym because he is a victim of a sex crime pursuant to N.Y. Civ. Rights § 50-b and other statutory and common law principles.

5. Indeed, Abrams remained employed by the Diocese and St. Patrick through 1988 until, in 1989, he was placed on "sick leave" and remained on such until 1997 when he retired.
6. Ten years later, in 2007, Abrams was permanently barred from public ministry and defrocked when an investigation into numerous claims of sexual abuse on young children against him turned up "sufficient evidence."
7. Abrams now appears on every compiled list of abusive priests and, upon information and belief, the Diocese has already paid out approximately \$2 million as a result of other claims of Abrams' abuse of minor children while he was at Sacred Heart and St. Patrick.
8. As such, upon information and belief, the Diocese knew or should have known in 1985 that Abrams sexually abused children and/or had the propensity to sexually abuse children.
9. Abrams' abuse of Plaintiff Mr. Doe began in or about 1985 when Mr. Doe was approximately six-years-old, and continued for approximately two years until in or about 1987 when Mr. Doe was approximately seven-years-old. Abrams sexually abused Mr. Doe between five and ten times.
10. Specifically, in or about 1985, when Mr. Doe's father got sick with cancer and Mr. Doe's mother was forced to spend a majority of her time taking care of Mr. Doe's father, Abrams began to manipulate a grief-stricken Mr. Doe by using his close relationship with Mr. Doe's grandmother to offer his services to "care for" and "watch over" Mr. Doe. Mr. Doe was left in Abrams' "care" for extended periods of time.
11. Mr. Doe's family trusted Abrams because he was a man of g-d and quite close with Mr. Doe's grandmother, but Abrams clearly betrayed that trust by molesting Mr. Doe between five and ten times over two years, including on Diocese premises.

12. When Abrams would get Mr. Doe alone, he would touch and fondle Mr. Doe's penis with one hand and masturbate with the other telling Mr. Doe that "you have to show g-d that you love him through me..."
13. Mr. Doe spent decades attempting to forget about the abuse he endured at the hands of Abrams, but was unable to confide in his family about the years of abuse he suffered.
14. Mr. Doe brings this lawsuit to recover for the emotional and physical suffering he incurred because of the negligence of the Diocese and St. Patrick's to make sure no other child is forced to suffer the abuse and physical and mental trauma he felt and continues to feel.

#### PARTIES

15. At all times herein mentioned, defendant **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** was a not for profit corporation incorporated in the State of New York and by virtue of the laws of the State of New York.
16. At all times herein mentioned, defendant **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** was located at 310 Prospect Park West, Brooklyn, New York 11215.
17. At all times herein mentioned, Abrams was operating under the direction and control of defendant **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** and its agents, servants and/or employees.
18. At all times herein mentioned, Abrams was an agent, servant and/or employee of defendant **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN**.
19. At all times herein mentioned, defendant **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK** was a not for profit corporation incorporated in the State of New York and by virtue of the laws of the State of New York.



20. At all times herein mentioned, defendant **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK** was located at 9511 4th Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11209
21. At all times herein mentioned, Abrams was operating under the direction and control of defendant **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK** and its agents, servants and/or employees.
22. At all times herein mentioned, Abrams was an agent, servant and/or employee of defendant **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK**.
23. At all times herein mentioned, defendants **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** and **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK**, were agents, servants, employees and/or alter egos of each other.

#### FACTS OF THE CASE

24. Defendants **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** and **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK**'s negligence and recklessness caused Abrams to have access to children, including on Diocese premises, despite its knowledge that Abrams sexually abused children and/or had the propensity to do so and therefore are responsible for the injuries that Plaintiff incurred because but for defendants **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** and **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK**'s negligence, Plaintiff would not have suffered the mental and physical anguish inflicted by Abrams. Defendants **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** and **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK**'s gross negligence, reckless, wanton and/or willful conduct warrants punitive liability.
25. Abrams was a reverend at St. Patrick's in Brooklyn, New York.

26. Abrams befriended Mr. Doe's family during a difficult period in their lives in order to gain their trust so that Mr. Doe would be left alone with him for extended periods of time. Abrams would offer to "take care" of Mr. Doe while Mr. Doe's mother cared for his cancer-stricken father.
27. Abrams would take Mr. Doe to several facilities under the umbrella of the Diocese, such as St. Patrick's, where he would repeatedly sexually abuse him.
28. Abrams would force Mr. Doe to kiss him, forcibly put his hands down Mr. Doe's pants and penetrate Mr. Doe's anus with his fingers.
29. Mr. Doe suffered the sexual abuse of Abrams between five and ten times over a two year period on Diocese premises.
30. As such, Plaintiff suffered catastrophic and lifelong injuries as a result of defendants **UDIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** and **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK**'s negligence in undertaking a duty to keep patrons, including young children like Mr. Doe, of its parishes safe from predators and failing to act in accord with that duty by allowing Abrams, a known predator, to continue his role and position of authority where he would continue to have the opportunity to prey on young children, and the Diocese failed to adequately supervise Abrams.
31. Due to defendants' unlawful conduct, Plaintiff has suffered catastrophic and lifelong injuries.

**AS AND FOR A FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION FOR  
NEGLIGENCE AS TO DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN**

32. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and realleges each and every allegation contained in those paragraphs of this Complaint marked and designated 1. through 31., inclusive, with the same force and effect as if hereinafter set forth at length.

33. At all times mentioned herein, defendant **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** owed a duty of care in loco parentis to keep the children of its parishes, including Plaintiff, safe from sexual abuse by its clergymen under its supervision and control, including on company premises, that ultimately befell Plaintiff, and they had a duty to supervise Abrams.
34. At all times mentioned herein, defendant **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** and/or its agents, servants and/or employees breached the above-stated duty in a negligent, reckless, willful and wanton manner, and caused Plaintiff to be sexually assaulted.
35. As a result of the negligence of defendant **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** and/or its agents, servants and/or employees, Plaintiff was caused serious personal injuries, emotional distress, mental pain and suffering, mental anguish and/or physical manifestations thereof, and other losses, all of which have not as of yet been ascertained.
36. By reason of the foregoing, Plaintiff is entitled to compensatory damages from defendants in such sums as a jury would find fair, just and adequate.
37. By reason of the foregoing, Plaintiff is also entitled to punitive damages from defendants in such sums as a jury would find fair, just and adequate.
38. The amount of damages sought exceeds the jurisdiction of all lower courts which would otherwise have jurisdiction.
39. This action falls within exceptions to Article 16 of the C.P.L.R.

**AS AND FOR A SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION FOR NEGLIGENCE**  
**AS TO ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK CHURCH**

40. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and realleges each and every allegation contained in those paragraphs of this Complaint marked and designated 1. through 39., inclusive, with the same force and effect as if hereinafter set forth at length.



41. At all times mentioned herein, defendant **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK** owed a duty of care in loco parentis to keep the children of its parishes, including Plaintiff, safe from sexual abuse by its clergymen under its supervision and control, including on company premises, that ultimately befell the Plaintiff, and they had a duty to supervise Abrams.
42. At all times mentioned herein, defendant **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK** and/or its agents, servants and/or employees breached the above-stated duty in a negligent, reckless, willful and wanton manner, and caused Plaintiff to be sexually assaulted.
43. As a result of the negligence of defendant **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK** and/or its agents, servants and/or employees, Plaintiff was caused serious personal injuries, emotional distress, mental pain and suffering, mental anguish and/or physical manifestations thereof, and other losses, all of which have not as of yet been ascertained.
44. By reason of the foregoing, Plaintiff is entitled to compensatory damages from defendants in such sums as a jury would find fair, just and adequate.
45. By reason of the foregoing, Plaintiff is also entitled to punitive damages from defendants in such sums as a jury would find fair, just and adequate.
46. The amount of damages sought exceeds the jurisdiction of all lower courts which would otherwise have jurisdiction.
47. This action falls within exceptions to Article 16 of the C.P.L.R.

**AS AND FOR A THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION FOR NEGLIGENT  
HIRING, RETENTION AND SUPERVISION AS TO DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN**

48. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and realleges each and every allegation contained in those paragraphs of this Complaint marked and designated 1. through 47., inclusive, with the same force and effect as if hereinafter set forth at length.
49. Defendant **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** had a duty to supervise and prevent known risks of harm to children and students of its parishes, including Plaintiff, by its clergymen.
50. Defendant was negligent in hiring, retaining and supervising their personnel, such as Abrams, who was careless, unskillful, negligent, reckless and acted in a willful and wanton manner in not possessing the requisite knowledge and skill of priests and church officials who should have properly been supervising the priests to ensure the safety of the children of the parishes.
51. Defendant **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** knew or should have known Abrams sexually abused and/or had the propensity to sexually abuse children and did nothing to stop it.
52. As a result of such negligent hiring, supervising and retention, Plaintiff was caused to suffer serious personal injuries, emotional distress, conscious pain and suffering, mental anguish and/or physical manifestations thereof, and other losses, all of which have not as of yet been ascertained.
53. By reason of the foregoing, Plaintiff is entitled to compensatory damages from defendants in such sums as a jury would find fair, just and adequate.
54. By reason of the foregoing, Plaintiff is also entitled to punitive damages from defendants in such sums as a jury would find fair, just and adequate.

55. The amount of damages sought exceeds the jurisdiction of all lower courts which would otherwise have jurisdiction.

56. This action falls within exceptions to Article 16 of the C.P.L.R.

**AS AND FOR A FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION FOR  
NEGLIGENT HIRING, RETENTION AND SUPERVISION  
AS TO ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK**

57. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and realleges each and every allegation contained in those paragraphs of this Complaint marked and designated 1. through 56., inclusive, with the same force and effect as if hereinafter set forth at length.

58. Defendant **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK** had a duty to supervise and prevent known risks of harm to children and students of its parishes, including Plaintiff, by its clergymen.

59. Defendant **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK** was negligent in hiring, retaining and supervising their personnel, such as Abrams, who was careless, unskillful, negligent, reckless and acted in a willful and wanton manner in not possessing the requisite knowledge and skill of priests and church officials who should have properly been supervising the priests to ensure the safety of the children of the parishes.

60. Defendant **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK** knew or should have known Abrams sexually abused and/or had the propensity to sexually abuse children and did nothing to stop it.

61. As a result of such negligent hiring, supervising and retention, Plaintiff was caused to suffer serious personal injuries, emotional distress, conscious pain and suffering, mental anguish and/or physical manifestations thereof, and other losses, all of which have not as of yet been ascertained.

62. By reason of the foregoing, Plaintiff is entitled to compensatory damages from defendants in such sums as a jury would find fair, just and adequate.
63. By reason of the foregoing, Plaintiff is also entitled to punitive damages from defendants in such sums as a jury would find fair, just and adequate.
64. The amount of damages sought exceeds the jurisdiction of all lower courts which would otherwise have jurisdiction.
65. This action falls within exceptions to Article 16 of the C.P.L.R.

**AS AND FOR THE FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION FOR NEGLIGENT  
INFLICTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS AS TO DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN**

66. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and realleges each and every allegation contained in those paragraphs of this Complaint marked and designated 1. through 65., inclusive, with the same force and effect as if herein set forth at length.
67. Defendant **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** and their agents, servants and/or employees, knew or reasonably should have known that the failure to properly advise, supervise and hire Abrams, the priest who sexually abused Plaintiff, would and did proximately result in physical and emotional distress to Plaintiff.
68. Defendant **DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN** and their agents, servants and/or employees knew or reasonably should have known that the sexual abuse and other improper conduct would and did proximately result in physical and emotional distress to Plaintiff.
69. Defendant had the power, ability, authority and duty to intervene with and/or stop the improper conduct that resulted in Plaintiff being sexually abused by Abrams.
70. Despite said knowledge, power and duty, defendant negligently failed to act so as to stop, prevent, and prohibit the improper conduct that resulted in Abrams sexually abusing Plaintiff.



71. The amount of damages sought exceeds the jurisdiction of all lower courts which would otherwise have jurisdiction.

72. This action falls within exceptions to Article 16 of the C.P.L.R.

**AS AND FOR THE SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION FOR  
NEGLIGENT INFLICTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS  
AS TO ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK**

73. Plaintiff repeats, reiterates and realleges each and every allegation contained in those paragraphs of this Complaint marked and designated 1. through 72., inclusive, with the same force and effect as if herein set forth at length.

74. Defendant **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK** and their agents, servants and/or employees, knew or reasonably should have known that the failure to properly advise, supervise and hire Abrams, the priest who sexually abused Plaintiff, would and did proximately result in physical and emotional distress to Plaintiff.

75. Defendant **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK** and their agents, servants and/or employees knew or reasonably should have known that the sexual abuse and other improper conduct would and did proximately result in physical and emotional distress to Plaintiff.

76. Defendant had the power, ability, authority and duty to intervene with and/or stop the improper conduct that resulted in Plaintiff being sexually abused by Abrams.

77. Despite said knowledge, power and duty, defendant negligently failed to act so as to stop, prevent, and prohibit the improper conduct that resulted in Abrams sexually abusing Plaintiff.

78. The amount of damages sought exceeds the jurisdiction of all lower courts which would otherwise have jurisdiction.

79. This action falls within exceptions to Article 16 of the C.P.L.R.

**WHEREFORE**, Plaintiff demands judgement against defendants in such sum as a jury would find fair, adequate and just.

Dated: New York, New York  
October 11, 2019

MERSON LAW, PLLC

By: 

Jordan K. Merson  
Attorney for Plaintiff  
150 East 58<sup>th</sup> Street 34<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, New York 10155  
(212) 603-9100

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
COUNTY OF KINGS-----X  
JOHN DOE,*Plaintiff,*

Index No.: \_\_\_\_\_/19

-against -

ATTORNEY  
VERIFICATIONDIOCESE OF BROOKLYN and ROMAN CATHOLIC  
CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK,*Defendants.*  
-----X

JORDAN K. MERSON, an attorney duly admitted to practice in the Courts of New York State and a member of the firm **MERSON LAW, PLLC**, attorneys for the plaintiff in the within action, hereby affirms under penalty of perjury:

That he has read the within complaint and knows the contents thereof, and that the same is true to his own knowledge, except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and that as to those matters he believes it to be true;

That the sources of his information and knowledge are investigations and records in the file; and

That the reason this verification is made by affirm ant and not by the plaintiff is that the plaintiff is not within the County where the attorney has his office.

Dated: New York, New York  
October 11, 2019



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JORDAN K. MERSON

Index No.

Year 2019

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK  
COUNTY OF KINGS

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JOHN DOE,

*Plaintiff,*

*- against -*

DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN and ROMAN CATHOLIC  
CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK,

*Defendants,*

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SUMMONS AND VERIFIED COMPLAINT

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Merson Law, PLLC

*Attorneys for Plaintiff*

*Office and Post Office Address, Telephone*  
150 East 58<sup>th</sup> Street 34<sup>th</sup> Fl.  
New York, New York 10155  
(212) 603-9100

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To. All Parties

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